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Prospects Of Integrating Social Marketing Into The In-Service And Pre-Service Curricula In the Philippines

By

Zenaida T Domingo
1.0 INTRODUCTION

For over two decades, the potential of integrating social marketing in various development programs has been a concern of institutions and individuals involved in social technology. Specific sectors that have begun to recognize the value of marketing strategies in the delivery of social services are: education, agriculture, nutrition, health, family planning, livelihood programs, and others. Available literature would tend to show that many of these sectors use...
marketing methods in an intuitive manner, while others have consciously and systematically woven such methods in their program planning and implementation work in order to achieve their project objectives.

On the assumption that the importance of social marketing has been elevated to the level of consciousness of these sectors involved in development work, the bulk of this paper shall deal with the nature and scope of the possible integration that needs to be done in order that development workers, both at the in-service and pre-service levels, may be able to internalize social marketing strategies. Specifically, this paper shall attempt to identify program actors who would need marketing orientation or in-depth training at the various stages of pre-planning or policy definition through project evaluation.

2.0 SOCIAL MARKETING CURRICULAR AGENDA

2.1 Levels of Orientation/Training: In-Service and Pre-Service Levels

In general, there are two emerging levels of orientation to marketing strategies: the in-service and pre-service levels. It is to be noted that the present actors in social technology
work, from the decision makers down to the field staff, have had substantial training primarily on the content of their respective field of specialization (namely: agricultural techniques, family planning approaches, etc.) but they have very little, if not completely nil, preparation in the area of using marketing techniques in their respective sectors. The development of a curricular program on these techniques and the manner in which they may be harnessed to deliver social services is therefore deemed in order. This in-service program should target the planners, managers, implementors as well as project evaluators.

The pre-service level of training has the opportunity to reckon with both the substantive issues of social technology and the social marketing strategies as well. Such a curricular program shall hopefully provide the future social planners and workers with a theoretical perspective and adequate marketing skills prior to their actual entry into the world of development work.
2.2 Social Marketing in the Development Program Cycle

For the effective implementation of any development program which integrates marketing strategies, it is important that the marketing viewpoint be properly situated among the actors in all the components of the project implementation cycle, namely: pre-planning or policy definition, planning, design of delivery systems, implementation/utilization, and evaluation. Thus, the curricular implication in each of these components need not be underscored.

2.2.1 Policy-definition (pre-planning phase) is generally initiated and conducted by individuals with little working knowledge of marketing, or probably even the specific development program they wish to address. Mayo and Hornik (1981) opine that frequently, the process is initiated by political leaders or other high-level decision-makers whose responsibilities transcend government ministries. They are highly sensitive political figures, oftentimes generalists who would not have
detailed knowledge of the social issues they wish to address. There is need for these decision-makers to be acquainted with marketing-oriented programs because their decisions would have two important consequences. First, these decisions would establish the parameters for subsequent project planning activities. While other elements may come into play later, the basic nature of the program is defined during the policy definition stage. Further, the decisions during this stage would generally identify the nature of project elements to be detailed in later stages - namely: the goals, institutional framework, target clients, implementation or operations schemes, schedules, and the definition of broad marketing strategies.

The information requirements during this stage would already more or less define the general marketing support for the program. Let us take a look at the data requirements. As Mayo and
Hornik (1981) describes:

The first requirement involves assessment of the specific development problem to be addressed. That begins with a descriptive analysis: How widespread is the problem? What are its manifestations? It then turns to an understanding of causes and an identification of why previous solution attempts have failed.

Is there agreement among interested parties regarding the exact nature of the development problem to be addressed? For example, to the extent that an agricultural extension service is failing to serve farmers in a satisfactory way, where does the fault lie? Is it with the users themselves who may lack the knowledge and/or motivation to use available services? Could it be that the field staff lacks the experience or training necessary to work effectively with the clients in question? Could it be that the program's central administration is not backing the program with sufficient material or human resources? Or could it be that the essential program assumption - that there is information worth disseminating - is wrong? One or more of these shortcomings could account for failure and investigation may be required to determine where the true problem(s) reside.

When the policy planners are able to reckon with the above questions, then they shall consequently be able to develop broad project goals, general guidelines for project planning and the appropriate marketing approach. For instance, they will be able to decide on the use of a nationwide and multi-media-based marketing approach rather than a strategy using a single-medium in selected geographical spots, once they
appreciate the magnitude of the development problem they would address.

2.2.2 Planning work is usually done by individuals who actually oversee the development of a workable system and at times will ultimately be accountable for the program success or failure upon the completion of activities or sometime after the project completion. These individuals hold high sensitive positions in the government units undertaking the development program. Further, they have a more expanded knowledge of the nature of the problems of their agencies than the people involved in policy definition. In addition to their thorough appreciation of the problems and needs of their agencies, these planners would require physical and human resources, as well as adequate time and proper inter-agency linkages to undertake their planning activities supported by a relevant marketing scheme.

Several action points are included in the planning work. First is the identification of the program clients. Some questions related to program clients
are: (1) who are the recipients of the program? What are their characteristics (age, environment, abilities, aptitudes, interests, aspirations, etc.)? (2) what are their socio-economic and educational background? their training and experience? (3) are they readily available - in schools, clinics, cooperatives; or would it require substantial effort to locate them individually or in groups?

The next action point is in the area of client needs and program goals/objectives: (1) what are the client needs? are these needs prioritized? (2) are they familiar with the development program that would benefit them? (3) are they interested in the program, or would do they need to be motivated in order to participate in the program?

From the identification of client needs would emerge the project goals and objectives. These objectives should be quantifiable and should be based on the prioritized needs of the client.
The third action point is the design of the delivery system. This activity constitutes the biggest bulk of planning work and it is the area in which the a well-conceived marketing strategy is consequently needed. The design of the delivery system would include: (1) information plans to develop awareness of, and interest in the program (2) educational/instructional plans and direct training schemes that would develop the client skill or know-how in his participation to the program (3) actual client production. In these three phases of delivering the program to the clients, a marketing plan is totally imperative. It is generally observed, however, that the information planning phase would require the most substantial marketing support. Pertinent activities would include: message design and presentation; selection and planning the mix of information channels, prioritizing these channels (which is the primary channel? the secondary or radial channels, etc?); determining which program objective should go to which channel; determining the strategies and approaches
in each of the channels (i.e. demonstration, straight announcement, MTV, documentary presentation, drama-forms, use of puppets, magazine format and animation for broadcast media; comics, straight reporting, illustrations, photo presentations for print media, etc.); development of prototype and pre-testing of these prototypes prior to full-scale production; and information utilization scheme.

2.2.3 Project Implementation. When planning work is completed, project plans are usually turned down to a project implementing staff both at the central level and at the field level who should have a total appreciation of the project plans and the accompanying marketing scheme. Such appreciation would be of help to the implementors in their supervision and monitoring of the progress and mid-stream developments in the project. Further, this appreciation of the marketing plans becomes more critical when the implementation scheme requires the cooperative linkages among projects staff in different government agencies.
and/or private groups who are physically distant from one another. At the field level, there is a higher risk of interpreting plans in different ways, and therefore there is the subsequent risk of adopting different marketing viewpoints. Thus, the need for a complete understanding of the implementation and marketing plans.

Feedback on the implementation usually results in mid-project revision or re-alignment of plans. Consequently, the re-planning exercise also necessitates a re-definition of marketing approaches.

To illustrate:

There are really three types of decisions being made once a project has reached the maintenance stage. First, there is the correction of foul-ups in project logistics: delays in the delivery of materials, arrangement of group sessions or maintenance of television or radio receivers. Second, there is the restructuring of particular components (short of their elimination) when they no longer are serving adequately: slowing the pace of broadcast instruction or changing the incentives for participation in the field. Finally, it may be necessary to augment or re-assign responsibilities within projects - for example, the development of new content materials or the incorporation of new audiences rural mothers as well as semi-urban ones.

It is imperative, therefore, that feedback strategies be installed to insure that all planned for events in the system model are actually taking place. Are the receivers working? Are the group
sessions taking place? Are the materials arriving on time? Delivery mechanisms merit constant monitoring because they are likely to go wrong at any time (Mayo and Hornik, 1981).

The above mid-project developments would naturally require re-planning of both project operations and marketing support.

2.2.4 Project Evaluation. Project evaluation is the common concern of funding sources or project sponsors, policy makers, project planners and project implementors.

For the funding agencies and policy-makers, evaluation results would help them make decisions on the sponsorships of similar projects. For the project planners, their primary interests is the transferability of experiences, specifically "planners of new systems will not want to transfer unnecessary baggage. Nor will they want to adopt an existing model in toto if some of its components are not required in a particular setting "(Mayo and Hornik, 1981). These are just about the same areas of interest for the project implementors. At the project evaluation stage, the policy-makers, project planners and implementors
are equally interested in assessing the effectiveness of their marketing approaches in order to generate guidelines in the development of marketing strategies of future programs.

Summary Discussions:

The need for orientation/training on marketing and its subsequent integration into the overall social technology effort is felt on two levels: the in-service level and the pre-service.

The major curricular implication revolves around the nature, scope and extent of internalization among program staff involved in policy formulation, project planning, implementation and evaluation.

A general orientation on broad marketing strategies would enable the policy makers/decision-makers to define program directions on the social marketing of their respective sectors.

Thorough marketing academic courses or their equivalent are needed by both program planners and implementors at both the in-service and pre-service levels. Participants require a total training program on specific marketing techniques in the planning and implementation and
evaluation of social delivery.

Staff involved in program development would need training on the development of evaluation schemes primarily dedicated to the assessment of the marketing schemes utilized in the project.
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Cronbach, L. et al., Evaluation for an Open Society (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1980)


